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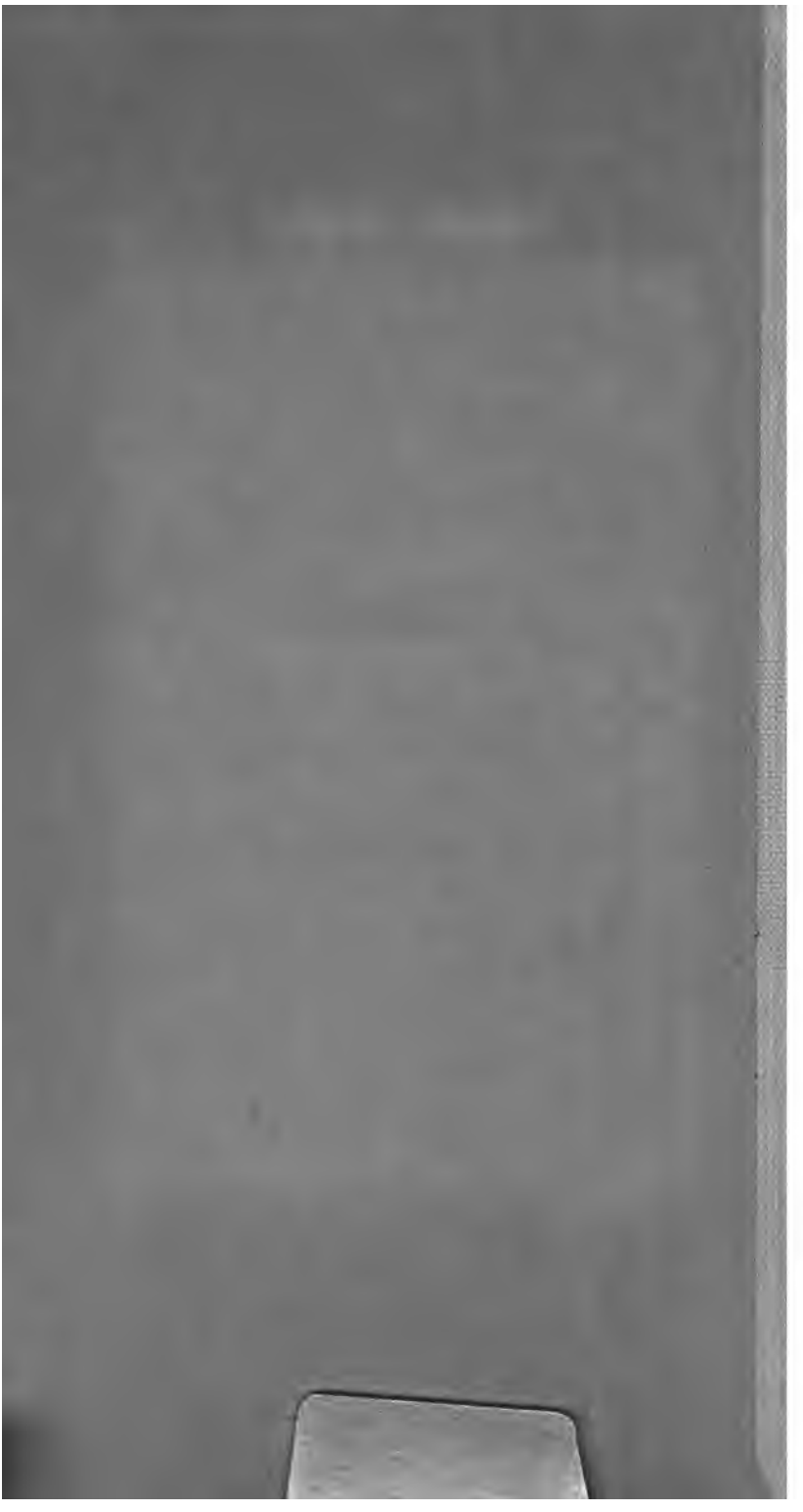


MILTON'S

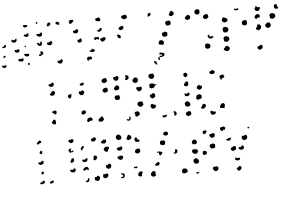
FAMILIAR LETTERS.

Translated from the Latin, with Notes,

BY

JOHN HALL.

Philadelphia:
PUBLISHED BY E. LITTELL,
No. 136 Chesnut Street.
1829.



Eastern District of Pennsylvania, to wit:

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the fourteenth day of April, in the fifty-third year of the independence of the United States of America, A.D. 1829, E. Littell, of the said district, hath deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

"Milton's Familiar Letters. Translated from the Latin, with Notes, by John Hall."

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned;" and also to the act entitled, "An act supplementary to an act, entitled, 'An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned,' and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

D. CALDWELL,
Clerk of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

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NEW YORK

THE domestic correspondence of MILTON possesses a value independent on positive merit; and however little attractiveness this collection may offer in other respects, the name of the author must reflect upon it an adventitious importance.—This consideration was the only literary motive to the present publication.

The *Epistolæ Familiares* were published by Milton in 1674, the year of his death. It is believed that they are the only known remains of his private letters, with the exception of one which is given by several of his biographers, and a note lately discovered in the English archives and printed

in the recent edition of his life by Mr Todd. And although it seems unaccountable that they have been heretofore neglected and almost unmentioned, yet the Translator has no reason to think that he has been anticipated.

He has studied to make the translation as plain and exact as the difference of phraseology would admit, and to insert no more in annotation than was necessary to elucidate, or add some interest to, the text.

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MILTON'S LETTERS.

I.

TO THOMAS YOUNG.

[Mr Young was Milton's private teacher before he entered St Paul's school in London. This connexion seems to have been dissolved nearly three years previous to the writing of this letter, at the date of which Milton was little older than sixteen. Young was one of the confederacy of polemics who wrote *Smectymnuus*, which was, probably, one of the reasons that induced his pupil to undertake its defence against the attack of Archbishop Usher. He issued several tracts with that design in the years 1641 and 1642.]

LONDON, MARCH 26, 1625.

My dear Preceptor:

Although I had determined to send you a short

letter in verse[1], I concluded that I would not be satisfied without writing another in prose; for the boundless gratitude which you may justly claim from me is not to be expressed in that restricted method, which must be measured by feet and syllables[2]; but in untramelled language, or rather, if I

---

[1] The poetical epistle alluded to followed this letter. It is the fourth poem in the 'Elegiarum Liber.' Young was at this time chaplain for the English merchants in Hamburg, where, it is probable, he was driven by his nonconformity. Milton addresses him as

—— 'ignoto solus inopsque solo,'

and likens his condition to that of Elijah, when he fled into the wilderness to avoid the vengeance of Jezebel. James I. died on the day after the date of the above letter, and Young in a short time returned. During the Presbyterian ascendancy he was promoted to the mastership of a college in Cambridge, which office he held, until another revolution in the form of the national religion exacted engagements to which his conscience would not bend.

[2] 'Nam neque noster amor modulis includitur arctis,
'Nec venit ad claudos integer ipse pedes.'
Elegy vi. *To Diodati.*

'For verse has bounds, and must in measure move,
'But neither bounds nor measure has my love.'
Cowper's Translation.

could accomplish it, in the exuberant style of the East. Yet, to declare how much I owe you, is far beyond my abilities, even were I to appropriate all the 'topics' that Aristotle, or the logician of Paris[3] has furnished, and exhaust the fountains of eloquence. You complain with truth, that my letters to you are very rare and short; but my deficiency in this agreeable and welcome duty does not grieve me, so much as the consciousness gratifies me—almost to exultation, that I occupy such a place in your friendship as requires to hear from me, frequently. I beg you not to put a bad construction on the fact, that I have not written to you for more than three years[4], but in your great kindness and

---

[3] Peter Ramus; whose exploded system of logic Milton attempted to revive with some modification, in his 'Artis Logicæ Plenior Institutio,' published in 1672. Ramus early distinguished himself by undertaking to prove that all the rhetorical principles of Aristotle were false; in consequence of which he suffered much persecution, but ultimately became a royal professor of philosophy and eloquence in Paris. He was one of the victims of St Bartholomew's day, 1572.

[4] In the Elegy to Young, Milton says that since he had met his tutor, 'Æthon had thrice seen Aries; that Chloris

good nature, put a milder interpretation on my neglect. For I call God to witness, that I honour you as a father; that I have a particular veneration for you, but fear to disturb you with my scribblings; and since they have nothing else to recommend them, I am resolved that they shall be rare. And as the strong affection I have for you enables me at any time to bring you before me, and see you and address you as if you were present, I can console my sorrow (as is usual in love) with the bare imagination of your company, though indeed I fear that as soon as I should think of sending you a letter, it would suddenly occur to me how distant you are, and my regret for your absence, just as it was alleviated, would be renewed, and the vision vanish.

I received some time ago your very acceptable present of a Hebrew bible[5]. I write this in Lon-

---

had twice sprinkled the earth with new grass, and Auster had robbed it of its wealth;' *i. e.* three vernal equinoxes, two springs, and two summers had elapsed. Either the complication of metaphors confused him out of his meaning, or Milton was separated from Young for some months before he left England for the continent.

[5] Not a neglected gift; as in a subsequent period of his

don, in the midst of city distractions, and not surrounded by books as I am accustomed to be; and if this letter should disappoint, instead of gratifying you, it shall be compensated in a more elaborate attempt as soon as I return to the walks of the Muses[6].

---

life at least, he daily read a portion of the original scriptures.

[6] He was at this time a student in the University of Cambridge.

II.

TO ALEXANDER GILL.

[Usher of St Paul's school whilst Milton was a pupil, and afterwards Master in succession to his father, of the same names. He wrote several Latin Triumphal poems. That which is the subject of the following eulogy was in commemoration of some recent success of the Stadtholder Frederick Henry. In 1632 Gill published a Pæan in honour of the victories of Gustavus Adolphus in Germany, and a collection of his performances under the title of 'ΠΑΡΕΡΓΑ, seu Poetici Conatus.']

LONDON, MAY 20, 1628.

I have received your letter, and, with peculiar pleasure, your *Poems*, which are truly grand, replete with the majesty of genuine poetry, and redolent with the genius of a Virgil. I knew that it was impossible for a man, with such talents as you possess, to withdraw your mind and its inspired ardour

from such attempts, and extinguish the sacred ethereal flame; since (as Claudian says of himself) 'all your soul is poetry'[1]. If you have broken the promise you made to yourself, I praise your inconstancy, as you call it, and commend whatever dishonesty you may be guilty of in so doing. For I do not feel less honoured in being constituted the judge of so excellent a performance, than if the contending deities of music had made me their umpire —which, as the Lydians pretend, happened to Tmolus, the favourite mountain God[2]. Indeed I know not on which to compliment Henry of Nassau the more—his taking the city[3] or your poem, for

---

[1] 'Totum spirent præcordia Phœbum.' Imitated by Milton in his sixth elegy:

'Irruet in totos lapsa Thalia sinus.'

'And all the Muse shall rush into thy breast.'
Cowper's Trans.

[2] In the contest between Pan and Apollo. See Ovid's Metamor. lib. xi.

[3] The town of Groll was taken by the Stadtholder in 1627, and Bois-le-duc in April 1628; one of these victories must have been the topic of Gill's performance.

in my opinion, his victory has produced no result more illustrious or memorable than it. But when we hear you celebrate in such melodious and triumphant strains, the successes of our allies, how great a bard may we not expect, if our own affairs, at length more prosperous[4], should call for your congratulating Muse? Farewell, learned Sir—again I thank you for your poems.

---

[4] This was written during the session of the third parliament of Charles I.; which obtained the *Petition of Right.*

The reader of these letters will be frequently reminded of Horace's Flatterer:

> 'Discedo Alcæus puncto illius. Ille meo quis?
> 'Quis nisi,' &c.

and be obliged to qualify the assertion of Dr Johnson, that Milton 'of his praise was very frugal.'

III.

TO ALEXANDER GILL.

CAMBRIDGE, JULY 2, 1628.

I wrote my last, not so much with the design of answering you, as of obtaining a letter in return: and I secretly resolved that another should shortly follow, in which I would reply somewhat more at large to your very friendly provocation. But although I did not promise it, I confess you would be fairly entitled to this, since a single one of yours can only be repaid by at least two such as mine—if more exactly calculated, indeed not by a hundred. The thing I have alluded to rather obscurely, (on which I was beginning to labour, under great pressure for time when yours reached me,) is herein enclosed. One of the fellows of college who had to appear in a public philosophical disputation, happened to commit to my inexperience the poem which is annu-

ally composed on the question: he having given up trifles of that kind, and bestowed his attention on matters of importance[1]. Having been printed[2], I send you a copy, knowing you to be a very acute judge of poetry, and a very candid one of mine. And if you condescend to communicate some of your own in return, no one will be better pleased with them; there may be, I confess, some who can more critically estimate their excellence. Whenever I recall our almost perpetual conversations (which, whether at Athens or the Academy[3], I desire and seek,) I immediately reflect, and not without repining, of how much benefit our separation defrauds me, who never left you without a consciousness of some literary accession, as if I had been at an emporium of learning. With us here, I know it to be the fact, that there are scarcely any who, ignorant and

---

[1] This production is entitled '*Naturam non pati senium*,' and is an article in the *Liber Sylvarum*, in the collection of Milton's Latin poems.

[2] The comitial verses were generally printed for private circulation.

[3] I suppose London and the University are figured.

illiterate as they are in philology and philosophy, do not pounce unfledged upon theology; satisfied to skim lightly even that study, gathering, perchance, as much as may suffice for a declamation, stuck together in any manner, and patched, as it were, with the cast-off rags of others; so that it is to be feared that the monkish ignorance of a former age may gradually settle on our clergy. As I can find almost no companions in study here, I would go at once to London, had I not a thought of spending the summer vacation in an entirely literary seclusion, and to bury myself in the cloisters of the Muses: which being your daily life, it would be criminal for me any longer to prattle in your presence. Farewell.

IV.

TO THOMAS YOUNG.

CAMBRIDGE, JULY 21, 1628.

My dear Preceptor:

The only part of your letter which strikes me as superfluous, is your apology for delay: for, desirable as your correspondence is, how can I hope that you have so much time to spare from serious and more sacred employments, as to be always at leisure to answer me? especially as it is wholly an act of charity, and not a duty. The many claims that your kindnesses have lately made of me, forbid the suspicion that you had forgotten me; and, indeed, you have so laden me with favours, that I cannot imagine how you *could* forget me. I will willingly comply with your invitation to visit you in the country in the course of the summer, to enjoy the pleasures of the season and of your conversation, and

withdraw for a while from the bustle of the city. I will go to your Stoa in Suffolk[1], as to the celebrated porch of Zeno, or Cicero's Tusculan villa, where you, in moderate circumstances, but with a truly royal mind, reign peacefully over your little field, like a Serranus or Curius[2]: regardless of fortune, triumphing over wealth, ambition, pomp, luxury, and whatever the vulgar admire and wonder at. As you deprecate delay, I hope you will in turn pardon my haste, for as I postponed this letter to the last moment, I chose to write a short one, and that in an unpolished style, rather than none. Farewell, respected sir.

---

[1] On his return from Hamburg, Young settled in Suffolk, where he was pastor for thirty years, and died.

[2] 'Te sulco, Serrane, serentem' (Æneid, vi. 844.) illustrates this cognomen of Cincinnatus. Curius is the consul whom the Samnite ambassadors found boiling his dinner. They are both commemorated in Paradise Regained, Book ii.

'Quintius, Fabricius, Curius, Regulus
* * * * *
'Who could do mighty things, and could contemn
'Riches, though offered from the hand of kings.'

V.

TO ALEXANDER GILL.

[In 1632, Milton left Cambridge with the degree of Master of Arts, and resided in the country with his father until he set out on his travels in 1638. During that space he wrote most of his popular minor poems.]

FROM MY SUBURBAN RETREAT,
DECEMBER 4, 1634.

Had you made me a present of gold, or embossed vases, or any thing of that kind which catches the admiration of mortals, it would certainly be disgraceful, if I did not make as handsome a return as my abilities could supply. But when you send me such delightful hendecasyllables as you did the day before yesterday, in proportion as the value of the gift exceeds that of gold, my solicitude is increased to find an equivalent for such a favour. Some of my matters of the same kind are at hand, but I would

by no means put them on an equality with yours. I send you, therefore, what is evidently not my own, but a psalm of the truly divine poet, which one morning last week, before sun-rise and almost in bed, without premeditation, but under a sudden impulse, I turned into Greek heroics[1]. I avail myself of his assistance, who excels you in his subject, as much as you do me in skill, that I might contribute something to balance your gift. If you see any thing in it that does not come up to what you would expect from me, remember that this is my first and only attempt in Greek since I left your school; and you know I am more willingly familiar with Latin and English. Whoever in this age expends his study and labour in writing Greek, is in danger of singing to deaf ears.

Farewell. You may look for me (God willing) in London on Monday, among the booksellers. In the mean time, if you can take advantage of your friendship with the Doctor, who is the president of the college for this year, to promote my business, I beg you will see him respecting it as soon as possible. Again, farewell.

---

[1] The 114th Psalm: published with his Latin and Italian poems.

VI.

TO CHARLES DIODATI.

[Diodati was a school-fellow of Milton at St Paul's. He derived his Italian name from his father, who was of that country, but married in England, where this son was born and educated a physician. He was distinguished for his virtues and scholarship, and seems, unlike his correspondent, to have been fond of Greek, as he wrote two letters to him in that language. Apparently in courtesy to his friend's taste, all the phrases quoted in the two following letters are from Pindar, and other Greek authors. T. Warton, who has made copious hypercritical annotations on Milton's minor poems, suggests that Diodati is the 'certain shepherd lad' in Comus, whom the spirit describes as

'Of small regard to see to, yet well skilled
'In every virtuous plant and healing herb,
'That spreads her verdant leaf to the morning ray,

who taught her the magical powers of 'hæmony.' There are two elegies in the collection addressed to him: the first written about 1627, in which occurs the allusion to Milton's leaving Cambridge, which has given rise to so much

idle dispute respecting its cause. His own language indicates that that act was voluntary, and not compulsory, as it is generally represented; being determined 'no longer to endure the threats of a hard master, and other things to which my temper cannot submit.' Which expression has been amplified by Dr Johnson and others, into a confession that he received corporal punishment.

The second elegy (1629) was in reply to some verses, in which Diodati had described the festivities of a Christmas spent in the country, and offered the indulgence into which the occasion betrayed him, as an apology for the poverty of his poem, which Milton very happily turns against him, by enumerating the classical precedents in favour of the inspiration of wine and mirth, taking occasion to explode some innocent flattery—an opportunity which he was never disposed to pretermit:—*ex. gr.*

'Favent uni Bacchus, Apollo, Ceres.
'Scilicet haud mirum, tam dulcia carmina per te,
'Numine composito, tres peperisse Deos.'—34 to 36.

Diodati died in 1638, whilst Milton was on the continent, an event which really afflicted him. On his return, he wrote a pastoral elegy to his memory, under the title of 'Epitaphium Damonis,' in which Milton, personified by Thyrsis, bewails the loss of his companion. Almost all his Latin poems are excellent: Cowper thought this epitaph equal to any of the Bucolics; Dr Johnson affirms, on the other hand, that it is 'written with the common, but childish, imitation of pastoral life.']

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 2, 1637.

I now see plainly that you mean to vanquish me by being obstinately silent; if so, take your triumph, for I write first! But if we shall ever happen to argue, why neither has written to the other 'for this long while,' take care lest you have to own, that I am much the more excusable: 'I being naturally slow and lazy about writing,' as you well know, whereas, you, on the contrary, whether through nature or habit, have not in general to be dragged to literary 'addresses' of this kind. Besides, this is in my favour, that I know your method of study to be so arranged, that you frequently stop to breathe; that you visit your friends; write much; occasionally take a journey: whereas my disposition is such, that no impediment, no rest or care for rest, no reflection, prevents me from continuing in my course, until I bring my study to a full period. From this cause, and from no other, (by your leave!) it happens, that although I tardily approach duties which I would rather postpone, yet, my friend, I am no loiterer in *answering;* and it has never happened through my neglect of writing, that a letter should not be due from you. What! you, as I hear, can

write frequently to your bookseller, and to your brother, either of whom are near enough to hand me your letters, if there were any. But I chiefly complain, that you did not fulfil your promise, of stopping to see me, when you left the city; and this breach of faith (if you once thought of your engagement,) gave you an almost unavoidable topic for a letter. I think I may justly tax you with these matters. You will say what you may judge proper in reply. But in the mean time I pr'ythee how are you? are you well? what smatterers have you to associate and converse with, as we used to do? when do you return? how long do you intend to remain among the 'hyperboreans?' I wish you to reply to each of these interrogatories. And lest you should not be apprised that I have your welfare still at heart, know that, in the beginning of Autumn, I went out of my road to inquire of your brother what you were about; and lately, when somebody, I forget who, told me in London that you were in the city, I forthwith, and 'at the first sound,' sped to your lodgings; but it was the 'dream of a shadow,' for you were not to be seen. Wherefore, if it be no inconvenience, make haste to return, and settle yourself in some situation, that may afford a prospect, that by some possibility, we may occasionally

see each other; for I would not care that we should be neighbours on any other condition; I a rustic, and you a cit: 'but this as God pleases.' I have many things to tell you of myself, and my studies, but would rather communicate it to you in person. I am going to the country tomorrow, and should be preparing; so that I can scarcely throw these sentences coherently together. Farewell.

VII.

TO CHARLES DIODATI.

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 23, 1637.

Most friends think it sufficient to wish one's health once in a letter, but I observe that you are anxious to do so as often as possible; and now, to the mere expression of wish, which you formerly offered, and my other friends yet offer, you add your science, and the whole force of your medical skill. For you wish me six hundred healths—to be as well as I wish, as well as I can be, and even more. Truly you scatter the whole larder of health with such profusion, that you ought to be the butler of the goddess Salus; or health, at least, should be your parasite, so you bear yourself as a monarch, and command obedience. I therefore must congratulate you, and give you double thanks as my friend and physician.

I looked for your promised letter long since, but believe me, my ancient friendship did not cool in the least, during the delay. In fact, I anticipated the very excuse with which you commence, as was proper, and consistent with our intimacy. For I would not wish true friendship to depend on the movements of letters and compliments, which may be fictitious, but to flourish and be supported by fixing its roots deep in the heart, sincere and sacred in its commencement, to continue unsuspecting and blameless through life: less dependent for animation on letters, than on a mutual lively remembrance of each other's virtues. So that if you had not written at all, it does not follow that there is no substitute to perform that duty for you: your excellent character serves as a letter, and one congenial with my deepest feelings; the simplicity of your manners and love of rectitude answer the purpose of a letter; and your genius is my correspondent, but by no means a daily one, commending you still more palpably to me. Wherefore, having possession of the tyrannical temple of medicine, hide from me its terrors; and if you wish me your six hundred healths, by exact calculation, demand them all from me at once, and remove the formidable 'bulwark' with

which you have surrounded me to prevent my sickening without your permission, if ever I (which may God prevent!) abandon your friendship. How much soever you threaten me, it is impossible that I should not love those who resemble you. What Providence has ordained for me in other respects I know not; but of this I feel assured, that 'if in any one, he has instilled in me, a great admiration of moral excellence;' nor did Ceres, in the fable, seek her daughter[1] with as much toil, as I have this 'idea of excellence,' like some beautiful image, through all the forms and shapes which things assume: ('for spirits have many shapes'). I pursue it day and night, and follow its traces with determined steps. Whence it happens, that whenever I find any one who despises the opinions of the vulgar, in their erroneous estimation of things[2], and dares

---

[1] 'That fair field,
'Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,
'Herself, a fairer flower, by gloomy Dis
'Was gathered, which cost Ceres all that pain
'To seek her through the world.'
Par. Lost, iv. 268.

[2] In a speech very unnaturally appropriated to the Saviour, 'the people' are denounced as

to judge, and speak, and be that which the highest wisdom has in every age taught to be best, impelled by some necessity, I join myself to him. But if it be so decreed by nature or fate, that no exertion or labour will enable me to emerge to such fame and eminence, I think neither God nor man will prohibit my honouring and admiring those who have attained, or are successfully aspiring to that glory[3].

'a herd confused,
'A miscellaneous rabble, who extol
'Things vulgar, and, well weighed, scarce worth the praise:
'They praise and they admire they know not what,
'And know not whom, but as one leads the other;
* * * * *
'Of whom to be dispraised were no small praise,' &c.
Par. Reg'd, iii. 49.

[3] The tempter uses a similar argument in *Paradise Regained.*

'Though I have lost
'Much lustre of my native brightness, lost
'To be beloved of God, I have not lost
'To love, at least contemplate and admire,
'What I see excellent in good or fair,
'Or virtuous; I should so have lost all sense;
'What can be then less in me than desire
'To see thee and approach thee, whom I know,' &c.
Book I. 377.

But I know you are anxious that I should satisfy your curiosity. You ask me divers questions, even of my thoughts. Listen, my friend, but let me whisper it lest I blush, and let me tell you great matters. Do you ask what I am thinking of?—so may Providence protect me—of immortality! What am I doing? 'I am pluming,' and meditate a flight: but my Pegasus soars as yet on tender pinions[4]. Let us grow wise humbly.

Now I will tell you what I am seriously thinking of—to enter some of the Inns of Court where there is a pleasant shady walk, and a few companions[5]. I should have a more convenient residence there when at home, and a 'more respectable rendezvous,' when I choose to make a sally. My present quarters, you know, are obscure and confined.

You must be informed too of my studies. I have read the Grecian history continuously, until the Greeks cease to exist as a nation. I read a long

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[4] Lycidas, L'Allegro and Il Penseroso were all written about this time.

[5] There was probably less seriousness in this intention than in that which he, with some inconsistency, disavows.

time the obscure history of Italy under the Lombards, Franks and Germans, until it obtained its independence from Rodolphus emperor of Germany. I shall read the wars of each state separately.

But what are *you* doing? in what domestic affairs are you so employed, that there is danger of your city friends being forgotten! Unless this step-mother war[6] is more baleful than the Dacian or Sarmatian, you should make haste that you may at least winter with me. In the mean time, if it will not trouble you, please send me Justiniani the Venetian historian[7]. I engage to preserve it carefully until your visit: or if you would rather, have it sent to you soon afterwards. Farewell.

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[6] I know not what reference is meant here, unless it be to the disturbances consequent upon forcing the liturgy of the English church upon Scotland, and which was attempted to be read in obedience to the order of the king, on the 23d of July of this year in Edinburgh.

[7] Augustin Justiniani, a Dominican, published a History of Genoa, in 1537.

VIII.

TO BENEDICT BONMATTHEI.

[In 1638 Milton travelled through France and Italy. At Florence he became acquainted with Bonmatthei, who was preparing an Italian grammar. Whether his correspondent availed himself of the hints of the following letter on the subject, I have no means of ascertaining, not having found any information respecting either the grammar or its author, besides what the letter itself furnishes.]

FLORENCE, SEPTEMBER 10, 1638.

I perceive that by the promise of your Italian grammar, which you are completing, (and which will place you on the same road to fame with men of the highest talents,) you have excited the confident expectation of your fellow-citizens, that you are about to add light, or copiousness, or at least correctness and method to what they have already

learned from others; and your countrymen must be ungrateful, if they do not acknowledge, that such a service connects you with them by no ordinary tie. In my opinion, the first and most distinguishing honours are due to him, who has sagaciously moulded the manners of society, and can legislate with the best policy in peace and war. Next in rank to such a man, I consider him, who exerts himself to establish, by maxims and rules, and as it were to fortify by their means, the proper method of speaking and writing, as practised in the purest age: providing for their infraction with the rigour of a Romulus. If you would compare the usefulness of these two characters: the first effects the just and inviolable civil intercourse of the citizens; the other imparts to it gentility, polish and elegance, which are the next desirable qualities: the one provides fearless courage, and intrepid counsels to oppose an invading enemy, the other endeavours to check the incursions of intellectual barbarism—that foul domestic foe to genius—by teaching accuracy in speaking, and a ready use of good authors. For it cannot be deemed of little importance, whether a language be pure or corrupt, or the common mode of speaking be correct or otherwise; this was never

considered a safe state of things at Athens; and if Plato thought, that an innovation in dress and fashion portended commotions and changes in the republic, much more readily would I believe, that in the event of the *language* becoming vitiated and erroneous, a state would decline, and a degraded and obscure condition succeed. The general faults of language are inelegance, harshness, incorrectness and wrong pronunciation: what do these indicate, and that by no slight evidence, but that the minds of the people are indolent, listless and prepared for any servility? On the other hand, I have never heard of an empire or state, that did not flourish, at least in some degree, so long as it maintained the care and culture of its own language. As you advance therefore, my friend, in accomplishing this work, remember what an honourable and enduring gratitude you must certainly earn from your countrymen. I have made the above remarks, not supposing that you are ignorant on the subject, but under the conviction, that you are more solicitous how you may best repay your country, than to bring it in debt to you.

I will now say a word with respect to foreigners; on whom if you are disposed to confer an obligation, a fair opportunity is now presented; for every one of

them of accomplished talents, or refined manners, holds the Italian in the highest estimation, and thinks that it ought to be incorporated as a branch of solid learning, and particularly where Greek and Latin are but little, or not at all known. I have surely done more than sip both these languages, but, however it may be with one who has taken larger draughts in proportion to his age, yet as to myself I can always go willingly and eagerly to revel with Dante and Petrarch, and others of your poets. Nor has Attic Athens itself, with its pellucid Ilyssus, nor old Rome with its Tiber, been able to confine me to their banks: for I love to visit frequently your Arno and the hills of Fæsole[1].

Now tell me if there was not a sufficient cause which made me, a remote foreigner, your guest for a few days, and such a lover of your country, that it seems to me I love none better? Which you can remember the more easily, as I have laboured to en-

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[1] 'Milton was so well skilled in Italian, that at Florence the Crusca, an Academy instituted for recovering and preserving the purity of the Florentine language, often consulted him on the critical niceties of that language.'—*Warton.*

gage you to add to your work now in progress, and almost finished, something for the sake of foreigners on the proper pronunciation of the language, which might be easily acquired. For it seems to have been the desire of those who have written on the subject, even to this day, to satisfy their countrymen, without caring for us. But in my judgment, they would have consulted better for their own reputation, and the honour of the Italian, if they had delivered their instructions, as if it concerned every man to seek the knowledge of that tongue: they did not care how little desirous of wisdom you Italians shut up within your Alpine walls might appear to us. This fame therefore is untasted; all will be yours; it has been reserved untouched and entire for you. Nor would it be diminished, if you would take the trouble to discuss the multitude of your authors separately, showing who is entitled to the next place to the illustrious founders of the language; who is distinguished in tragedy; who lively and witty in comedy; ingenious or solid in letters and dialogues; renowned as historians. To a studious person so disposed, it would not be difficult to select some one of peculiar distinction, and enlarge, as he would frequently have an opportunity of doing. In this

species of composition, you have Cicero and Fabius among the ancients as models, but none of your own authors that I know of. Although whenever I hint this to you, it seems as if for the first time I perceive the extent of your courtesy and amiable disposition, yet I am unwilling that you should suppose that I am imposing upon you on that account, in thinking that I can prevail upon you without much importunity or perseverance. But as your modesty and candour put the lowest estimation on your own works, I am desirous of valuing them properly, according to my real opinion of their worth: and surely it is entirely equitable, that the credit of granting a favour should be in proportion to the promptness of the benefactor.

If you wonder why I use Latin instead of Italian in this argument, my object is to confess my unskilfulness and ignorance of a language which I am anxious to see illustrated by your rules: and for this reason, I hoped that I should be more successful in my petition, if I brought the aged and venerable mother from Latium to assist me in her daughter's cause; believing that such was your respect for the authority of her august and ancient majesty, that you could make her no denial. Farewell.

IX.

TO LUKE HOLSTEIN.

[From Florence Milton travelled to Rome, where he made the acquaintance of Holstein, the librarian of the Vatican, whose attentions he details in this complimentary letter, written on his return to Florence. Holstein was a native of Hamburgh, and educated a protestant; having removed to Paris, he joined the Roman church, and changing his residence to Rome, was appointed canon of St Peter's by Urban VIII.; and afterwards librarian, by Innocent X. He was sent by his successor Alexander VII. to receive from Christina, the masculine queen of Sweden, her renunciation of the Protestant religion, and to admit her into the Roman Catholic church. He was in much repute for his learning, and edited and translated several works. Among them are dissertations in Græ-vius's Roman Antiquities, and notes on Eusebius and Porphyry. He died at Rome in 1661, and a monument was erected on his grave by his patron Barberini.]

FLORENCE, MARCH 30, 1639.

Although I remember many very respectful

and friendly attentions paid to me in my passage through Italy, yet considering the shortness of our acquaintance, I do not know that from any I have received greater marks of kindness than from you. When I entered the Vatican in search of you, you received me, an entire stranger (unless perhaps you had heard of me through Alexander Cherubin[1]), with the greatest politeness, and, having afterwards courteously admitted me to the Museum, allowed me to inspect not only the choice library, but many Greek manuscripts, illustrated by your notes: some of which, not yet brought to light, stand in readiness, like Virgil's ghosts,

> 'Within the valley's shade,
> 'And just emerging into upper air,'

awaiting the hands of the printer to give them liberty. Others, already published under your superintendence, are eagerly received by the learned every where. I am indebted to you for a present of these works, and for two copies of one of them. And I cannot but believe that it was owing to your having

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[1] There was a Father Cherubin of Orleans, contemporary with Milton, who published a work on Telescopes.

mentioned me to the distinguished cardinal Francis Barberini, that a few days afterwards, at his public musical fête, which was conducted with truly Roman magnificence, he waited at the door to seek me amongst the crowd, and taking me by the hand, introduced me in the most flattering manner[2]. And when I called upon him the next day to thank him, it was owing to you that I obtained an audience and interview; which, for so distinguished a personage (than whom no man of equal dignity can be more kind and affable,) was, considering the place and time, rather long than very short. I do not know whether I am the only person who has enjoyed your friendship and hospitality, or whether you

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[2] Barberini was a nephew of Urban VIII. At this concert Milton heard the celebrated mother and daughter Adriana the fair, and Leonora: to the latter he addressed three Latin epigrams, complimentary and amatory.

A respectable American biographer of Milton, who has performed his task with more spleen towards Dr Johnson, than respect to the Poet, remarks, that Barberini was the deputed 'guardian' of the English, and that the honours paid to Milton were no greater than he was bound by his office to bestow.—*Sanford's Life of Milton. Brit. Poets*, vol. vii. *Philadelphia ed.*

make it your business to perform the same services to all Englishmen, in remembrance of the three years you spent as an Oxford student. If this be the case, you pay your fee to England handsomely, and deserve the thanks of the country at large, as well as of individuals. But if I have been specially honoured, and thought worthy of your hospitality, I congratulate myself on your good opinion, at the same time placing your civility above my merit.

As to the business you entrusted to me of seeing the manuscript in the Laurentian library, I have mentioned it particularly to my friends, who give me very little encouragement to hope that it can be accomplished at present. Nothing can be transcribed, nor even a line written in that library, without permission first obtained. They tell me, however, that John Baptist Doni[3], who has been invited to lecture on Greek literature at Florence, is daily expected here from Rome, and that through him it will be

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[3] A nobleman of Florence, devoted to the study of ancient music. He wrote several works on the music of the Greeks with whose literature he is said to have been very familiar. His publications were collected and issued in two volumes folio in 1763.

easy to obtain what you desire. I should be very happy if I could, by any exertions of mine perform so important a service for you; for it would be disgraceful, if all men, and means, and things did not cooperate to assist you in your honourable and commendable undertaking.

You will confer a new favour on me, by presenting my profound respects to the most Eminent[4] Cardinal, whose great virtues and conscientious uprightness—qualifications admirably calculated to promote the liberal arts—are always in my remembrance. As also is his mild and (if I may so name it) humble magnanimity, which has become exalted by attempting to depress itself; of which it can be truly declared, as Callimachus says of Ceres, but with a different sentiment, 'her feet are on the earth, but her head touches heaven.' His example should teach other dignitaries that haughtiness and courtly pride are remote from, and at variance with, true greatness. Whilst he lives, no one need wish for the Estes, the Farnese, or the Medici, the former patrons of learning.

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[4] Barberini was the first cardinal who assumed the title of *Eminency*.

Farewell, learned sir, and if there be any one more attached to you and your studies, than I am, wherever he be, I beg you to associate me with him —if you think me of that consequence.

X.

TO CHARLES DATI.

[Milton returned to London in 1639. In the interval of eight years since the last letter, he was engaged in the episcopal and matrimonial controversies; redeeming in some degree that waste of labour, by publishing a volume of poems, a tract on education, and, the master-piece of his prose compositions, the *Areopagitica*.

Dati was of a noble family in Florence, and professor of Greek and Belles Lettres there. He wrote a discourse on the importance of correct language, a panegyric on Louis XIV., and the lives of four of the principal Grecian painters, the commencement of a projected biographical series, which he did not continue. He also published a selection of Italian prose. Milton names him in the 'Epitaphium Damonis,' and prefixed an extravagant encomium by him to his Latin poems[1]. He died in 1675.]

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[1] Toland, with his usual simplicity, says of this production, 'I don't think the Italian flourishes were ever carried

London, April 21, 1647.

As it is out of my power to express the extraordinary pleasure your unexpected letter gave me, I must let you know that it was attended with sorrow, with which no mortal happiness is unmingled. For, to read the first part of your epistle, in which elegance of style vies with friendship, I may call real delight; especially as I see that you labour to give friendship the ascendency. But when I come to the paragraph in which you state that you have written three letters, which I know must be lost, my sincere pleasure is infected and disturbed by sad regret. Then a still more distressing reflection succeeds—one in which I frequently bewail my situation—that those with whom neighbourhood, or any other unimportant connection, accidental or legal, has associated me, visit me every day, without any other warrant, teasing and torturing me as often as they choose, whilst almost all those whose address, talents, and pursuits attach them to my affection,

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further than in this elogy, which, notwithstanding, is sincere, and penned by an honest man.'

are separated from me by death or the most cruel distance; and are so rapidly snatched from my sight, that I am forced to an almost perpetual solitude[2].

I am flattered by your anxiety for my safety after I left Florence, and your continued remembrance of me; by which I perceive that the feelings, which I thought were exclusively my own, are mutual. I can not conceal from you, that my departure was very afflicting to me, and fixed a sting in my heart, which still rankles, when I think from how many excellent and kind companions and friends, in that distant but beloved city, I have been torn away. I

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[2] In this year Milton's father died, at an advanced age. He was a distinguished composer of music, and a man of education. In the beautiful poem addressed to him, Milton flatters his parent by representing his love of harmony to be hereditary:

'Now say, what wonder is it, if a son
'Of thine delight in verse, if so conjoined
'In close affinity, we sympathize
'In social arts, and kindred studies sweet?
'Such distribution of himself to us
'Was Phœbus' choice; thou hast thy gift, and I
'Mine also, and between us we receive,
'Father and Son, the whole inspiring God.'

Ad Patrem. Cowper's trans.

declare that the grave of Damon[3] will be always sacredly regarded by me. In commemorating his death, under the oppression of grief, nothing was more consolatory than to remember you all and recall you individually to mind[4]. You would have received those verses long since, if they had not miscarried, of which you gave me the first intelligence, for I took care to send them to you immediately, that however little genius they may evince, even these few lines, composed as a memento, would be no obscure evidence of my regard. I thought too, that I might thus entice a letter from some of you; for if I had written first, I must have written to all, for a preference of one would offend the rest; as I hope there are still many who would claim this duty from me. But you, by this most friendly provocation, and having written three times, requiring my answer, have prevented the censure of the others. I confess I ought to add, as another cause of silence, the turbulent condition of Great Britain[5] since my

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[3] Diodati. See Letter VI.

[4] In the epitaph he names Dati, Francini and Manso.

[5] The gathering of the storm brought Milton home be-

return, which necessarily drew my attention from studies, to preserve my life and property. How, think you, could you find a retreat for literary pursuits surrounded by civil war, slaughters, battles, and pillage? I have, however, in the midst of these calamities, written not a few patriotic works[6], which, if they were not written in English, I would with pleasure send you, to whose judgment I pay great deference. I will shortly despatch to you the Latin portion of my poems[7] as you request;

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fore his travels were completed. Soon after the date of this letter, Charles was the prisoner of the army.

[6] He must mean his works against Prelacy.

[7] Published in 1645, including Comus, Lycidas, L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, Arcades, Odes, English and Italian sonnets, Translations of sentences from various authors, Elegies, Epigrams, with a collection of Miscellanies in Latin and Greek, which, in imitation of Statius, is entitled 'Liber Sylvarum.' In 1673 (the year before his death) another edition, enlarged, was published. Cowper undertook to translate the pieces in the foreign languages, for a splendid edition of Milton's works, but his ill health and melancholy estranged him from it before his design was completed. The translations, in the state in which he left them, were published by Mr Hayley in 1808.

I should have done so long since, of my own accord, were there not some harsh things said of the Pope which I feared would not be acceptable to you[8]. Now, I beg you to obtain from my other friends (I am sure you will accord it) the same license to speak in my own way of your religious rites—not as you would allow to your Aligeri and Petrarch in a similar case, but such as you used very kindly to allow me in our conversations.

I read with pleasure your description of the obsequies of King Louis[9], in which I recognize your Mercury, not as the God of highways and merchandize, (in which character you facetiously declare you lately worshipped him) but the favourite of the muses, and the patron of the learned.

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[8] In the epigrams, the Church of Rome and the Pope are reviled with the characteristic indecency of the times. There are *four* on the gunpowder treason, an event which occurred before Milton was born. Such retrospective ill will to the Catholics might reasonably make him ashamed to send his lampoons to his Italian friend.

[9] Dati was a poet of some note, but there is no other mention of this production. He wrote several panegyrics on Louis XIV., one of which was published in Florence in 1669, and a French version of it appeared in Rome the next year.

We should make some arrangement how our future letters may be safely conveyed: which cannot be very difficult, as many of our merchants have frequent and extensive business with those of your city, and their respective couriers go every week, and their ships almost as often. I will entrust the business, and I hope safely, to Jacob the bookseller, or to his master, with whom I am well acquainted. Meanwhile, my friend, farewell, and present my respects to Cultellini, Francini, Frescobaldi, Malatesti, Clementilli, jun. and all my friends whom you know, and to the whole Gaddian Academy[10].

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[10] The literary *conversazionès*, which originated with the Medici, were for a long time continued in Florence. The one alluded to met at the house of James Gaddi. An Italian ode by Francini is prefixed to Milton's Latin poems. Malatesti dedicated a poem to Milton. The persons named in the text, and Bonmatthei, were the principal associates of Milton in Florence: they are recorded in the sketch of his travels in the 'Second Defence.'

XI.

TO HERMAN MILL.

[Envoy from Count Oldenburgh to the Commonwealth. In the collection of State letters, written by Milton, is one to the Count, acknowledging the receipt of 'an extraordinary congratulation from your excellency, most kindly and courteously delivered to us by word of mouth by Herman Mill, your counsellor and doctor of laws.'

In March 1648, Milton was appointed by the Council of State under the Commonwealth, their 'Secretary of Foreign Tongues;' as all their correspondence with foreign powers was conducted in Latin. This office he held at least eight years[1]. His Iconoclastes, written by order of the council, was published in 1649. It is difficult to conjecture his motive for placing this unimportant and official note to Mill in a selection of his Familiar Letters.]

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[1] Most of his biographers say, until the Restoration. But Mr Sumner (Prelim. Obs. to 'Christian Doctrine') quotes passages from the Council books, in which a pen-

WESTMINSTER.

Honoured Sir:

Before replying to yours of the 17th of December, I must explain the cause of my delay, lest you impeach me for so long a silence. First then, you must know that it has been partly owing to bad health, which is almost constantly interrupting me. Then, on account of my health, I was obliged suddenly to change my residence, and I was removing on the very day I received your letter. And lastly, I have not written, through shame that I had nothing to communicate respecting your business, which I thought would be acceptable. For the next day I accidentally met Mr Frost[2], and inquired

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sion is allowed to Milton, and another person credited with the salary of Latin Secretary after the year 1655. But in the end of 1657, one of the following letters speaks of the pressure of his business, and there is no account of any other employment to engage him at that time. It is probable that he was still occasionally employed on emergencies.

[2] There were two brothers of this name in the Council as its secretaries.

of him particularly what answer had been determined on (for I was frequently absent from council on account of my indisposition); he replied, and indeed with some concern, that there had been no decision, and that he could do nothing to promote the business[3]. I therefore thought it better to be silent at that time, than to write what I knew would vex you; and wait until I could have the satisfaction of communicating what we both so much desire to hear. This I hope I have accomplished to-day; for after I had repeatedly reminded the president in council of your business, he laid it before them, and to-morrow is fixed to deliberate on sending you an immediate answer. I thought it would be more agreeable to you, and be some indication of my regard, to receive this information, which I have endeavoured to be the first to give you.

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[3] I suppose this urgent matter is the same alluded to in the state letter quoted above, where an apology is made to Count Oldenburgh for the detention of Mill, 'whose solicitations were daily and earnest, with all the diligence and importunity which became him, to the end he might be despatched.' It was this Count Oldenburgh who sent Cromwell a present of the six coach horses, which had nearly cost him his life. (See Hume, note H. to Chapter LXI.)

XII.

TO LEONARD PHILARAS.

[An Athenian, on an embassy from the Duke of Parma to the French court, who had complimented Milton on his 'Defensio pro populo Anglicano,' published in 1641. This work was committed to him by the Council of state, who were alarmed by the defence of Charles I. written by Salmasius, at the instigation, it is said, of the Prince of Wales, then in Holland. The king's defence was condemned by the German Republic, and Milton's reply was publicly burned in France; but the editions of the latter were multiplied at home, and its author reaped a full harvest of honour, whilst his opponent fell into disgrace.]

LONDON, JUNE, 1652.

Accomplished Sir:

Of your good will to me, and your flattering opinion of my 'defence of the people of England,' I have learned by your letters to Mr Auger (a gen-

tleman of excellent credit in the legation to this country from the republic), which were written partly on that topic. Afterwards, I received your compliments, with your portrait, and an inscription worthy of your virtues. Again, I have received, through the same gentleman, your very kind letter. Without despising the genius of the Germans, the Danes, or the Swedes, I cannot but place the highest estimation on your judgment, who, born in Attic Athens, have completed your studies in Italy, and, by a full use of your advantages, have obtained the highest honours. If Alexander the Great, when carrying war to the ends of the earth, affirmed that he endured all his labours, 'for the sake of the glory they would gain him from the Athenians,' why may I not congratulate myself and consider myself greatly honoured by the praise of one, in whom the arts and virtues of the ancient Athenians seem to be revived, and to flourish? From that city have arisen most of the learned men, to whose writings I willingly attribute whatever literature I have acquired, since my youth. If I had imbibed from them sufficient eloquence to enable me to excite our fleets and armies to free Greece—the country of eloquence—from the Ottoman tyranny, (an exploit in which you

seem to implore my aid) I would surely accomplish it, as no object is more interesting or desirable. And what did the greatest soldiers and orators of antiquity think more glorious, or more worthy of their powers, than by persuasion and valour 'to make the Greeks free and independent?' But there is something else to be attempted—in my opinion far more important:—to rouse and kindle in the minds of the Grecians their ancient virtue, industry and patience of toil, by urging them to their old studies and pursuits. If any one can succeed in this, it is to be expected from no one sooner than from you, distinguished, as you are, for patriotism, joined with consummate prudence, and military skill, and the strongest desire for the recovery of their former liberty. And I think that if that were effected, the Greeks would not be wanting to themselves, nor any nation refuse its countenance. Farewell.

XIII.

TO RICHARD HEATH.

[Heath was a pupil of Milton, and afterwards distinguished for scholarship. He was particularly skilled in the oriental languages, and aided Bishop Walton in the preparation of his great Polyglot Bible.]

WESTMINSTER, DECEMBER 13, 1652.

My respected friend:

If I have been of any assistance, either in promoting your studies, or in procuring help for you, insignificant as it must have been, I rejoice, and not on my own account merely, that it was so successfully bestowed on good abilities, though late discovered; and that it has produced a worthy clergyman to the church, a good citizen to the country, and a most valuable friend to me. I believe this to be your character, from my knowledge of the former part of

your life, and from the fact, that you have excellent ideas on matters of church and state; but especially from your singular gratitude, which absence or time cannot extinguish or lessen. It cannot be otherwise than that you have made more than ordinary progress in virtue and piety, and in the study of the best subjects, since you are so grateful to those who have afforded you the least assistance in acquiring them. Wherefore, my pupil—for I will gladly, with your permission, address you by this title—I would have you believe that you are high in my estimation, and that I desire nothing more, than, if it suit your convenience and arrangements, that you would reside somewhere near me, that our intercourse may be more frequent, and our studies more agreeable—a plan which I perceive you have some inclination to. But let this be regulated as God pleases, and as it will suit your expedience.

Please to write hereafter in English, (although you are no slight proficient in Latin) lest the labour of writing should sometimes make either of us dilatory, and that our mutual feelings may be freely expressed without the incumbrance of a foreign language.

I believe you may safely entrust your letters to any of the household I mentioned. Farewell.

XIV.

TO HENRY OLDENBURGH.

[Consul from the dutchy of Bremen to England, during the Long Parliament and Protectorate: and after the expiration of his office, resident in London. Soon after the foundation of the Royal Society, he was elected an assistant secretary, and superintended the publication of the Philosophical Transactions from 1664 to 1677. He wrote several tracts and translations; of the latter are a life of the duchess of Mazarine, and an Explication of the Apocalypse. He married a daughter of Dury, mentioned in Letter XXVIII., and died in 1678.]

WESTMINSTER, JULY 6, 1654.

Honoured Sir:

When your courier handed me your former letter, I understood that he was about to return instantly, so that I had no time to send you an answer, but intended to do so immediately afterwards, when

I was surprised by unexpected business. Otherwise, I should not have sent you my book, though fortified by the title of a 'Defence' unaccompanied with an apology[1]. But behold your second letter is received, containing superabundant thanks for so trivial a gift.

I had no design of laying aside English for Latin, lest, as you have added that to all other foreign languages, which I know you have accurately and successfully studied, you should lose an opportunity of writing it, which I believe you can do with equal correctness. But hereafter make your own choice.

As to the subject you speak of, you must perceive with me that a 'clamor' of that kind puts all mortal senses to flight; and so much more audacious must he be, who has the effrontery to affirm that he heard

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[1] In the year after the publication of Milton's reply to Salmasius, a work appeared under the name of 'Regii Sanguinis *Clamor*,' &c. Milton was mistaken in attributing it to More (a Scotch clergyman in Languedoc), who only wrote the dedication to Charles II. and superintended the printing of the volume. The 'Defensio Secunda,' spoken of in this letter, was issued in 1654, and directed against More, and the controversy was continued by several justifications, replies, &c.

it. But you make me doubt who is the author. In our frequent conversations on the subject sometime ago, on your return from Holland, you seemed to have no question about it, that it was More—that no one else was named where it had been talked of. If you now have any more certain knowledge, I beg you will communicate it.

With regard to the handling of the argument, (for why should I dissemble?) I would wish not to dissent from you; for what is more calculated to induce one to venture upon the undertaking, than the candid judgment of prudent men like yourself, entirely devoid of flattery? Even if my ill health, and blindness[2], (more grievous than all the other consequences of old age) and the 'clamor' of these brawlers would permit, I know not whether I could ap-

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[2] He attributed his blindness in part to his exertions in this dispute:

'What supports me dost thou ask?
'The conscience, friend, to have lost them overplied
'In Liberty's defence; my noble task,
'Of which all Europe rings from side to side;
'This thought might lead me through the world's vain mask
'Content, though blind, had I no better guide.'

Sonnet to Skinner.

ply myself to a more noble or useful employment: for what in the compass of human affairs can be more noble or useful than the defence of liberty? Idle leisure never satisfied me, and this unwelcome contest with the enemies of liberty, has taken me from far different and more congenial pursuits; yet I have never repented of my course, since it was necessary. I am far from wasting my labour on useless matters as you seem to hint; but of these things at another time. I will not detain you longer; so farewell, most learned sir, and believe me

Yours, &c.

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LARAS.

SEPTEMBER 28, 1654.

honoured the Grecian
particular, as much as any
persuaded that that city
a worthy return for my
ancient genius of your

Athens are numerous in his
of its beauties in the third book
full and particular:

'Behold,
Ægean shore a city stands,
the air, and light the soil:
of Greece, mother of arts
native to famous wits,
in her sweet recess,' &c.

noble country disappoint my augury, but has given me you—who are a true Athenian and dearly attached to me. You have kindly addressed me by letter, separated as we are in our situations, and known to you only by my writings. And when you came unexpectedly to London, and visited me, when I could not see you, you manifested the same kindness even when I was in that calamity, which did not render me more conspicuous to any, and perhaps despicable in the estimation of some. But as you advise me not to abandon all hope of recovering my sight, and have at Paris your friend and relation Dr Thevenot, celebrated as an oculist, whom you can consult respecting my eyes if I give you an account of the causes and symptoms of their disease, I will comply with your suggestion, lest I should seem to reject assistance, when perhaps providentially offered.

I think it is about ten years since I first perceived my sight to weaken and become dull[2]: at the same time my spleen and bowels were disordered, and flatulent; as soon as I commenced reading in

[2] In his Second Defence, he says, that from his twelfth year, he was in the habit of studying till midnight, and that this was the first source of injury to his sight.

the morning, as usual, my eyes became very painful, and seemed opposed to the employment; but after moderate exercise of the body, they recovered; when I looked at a candle a kind of Iris surrounded it. Not long afterwards, a dimness arose on the left part of the left eye, (for that eye became dim many years before the other) which prevented my seeing any thing on that side. If I closed my right eye, objects in front of me appeared smaller. The other has been gradually failing for the last three years. For some months before I entirely lost the sight, every object that I looked at steadily, seemed to swim to the right and left: constant vapours appear to burden my whole forehead and temples, which generally depress my eyes with a drowsy heaviness, especially after eating meat, until evening; often bringing to mind the words of Phineus, the prophet of Salmydessus in the Argonautics[3]—

'Him vapours dark
'Enveloped, and the earth appeared to roll
'Beneath him, sinking in a lifeless trance.'
Hayley's Trans.

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[3] Lib. ii. 203.

'And Tiresas and Phineus, prophets old.'
Par. Lost, iii. 36.

I should not omit to mention, that whilst as yet some sight remained, as soon as I lay on my bed, and reclined on either side, a copious light shone out when my eyes were closed. Afterwards, as my sight diminished daily, obscurer colours flashed out with force, and with a kind of internal crackling; but at this time, the brightness being, as it were, extinct, a perfect blackness, or mingled with the colour of ashes, flows in. Yet the dimness which I experience by night and day, seems to incline more to white than to black, and when the eye rolls, a little light is admitted, as through a small crevice.

Whatever hope the physician may gather from this account, I prepare and compose myself, under the consideration that I am certainly incurable. And I often think, that since the days of darkness, to which every man is destined, are, as the wise man warns, many[4]; that mine, by the great mercy of Providence, happening in the midst of leisure, and studies, and the conversation and salutations of my friends, are much brighter than the shades of death. But if, as it is written, man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out

[4] Ecclesiastes, xi. 8.

of the mouth of God[5], why should not any one submit for this reason also, that he can see not only with his eyes, but that the leading and providence of God is sufficient sight[6]. Truly, if He take care of me—if He provide for me—which He does, and lead me by the hand, and accompany me through life, I shall willingly permit my eyes to be unemployed.

Whatever befalls me, my Philaras, I salute you with a mind not less strong and firm than if I were Lynceus[7].

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[5] Deuteronomy viii. 3, cited in Matthew iv. 4.

'Is it not written,
'Man lives not by bread only, but each word
'Proceeding from the mouth of God?'

Par. Reg'd, i. 347.

[6] 'So much the rather thou, Celestial Light,
'Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
'Irradiate,' &c.

Par. Lost, iii. 51.

In one of his political works he expresses his consolation that his blindness threw him more directly on the protection of Providence; and asserts that he was fond of considering the darkness which veiled his sight as rather *the shadow of the protecting wing of the Almighty*, than the loss of vision.

[7] The Argonaut who could see through the earth.

XVI.

TO LEO AB AIZEMA.

[Aizema or Aitzema, was a consul of the Hanse Towns. He was an accomplished linguist; and compiled a valuable History of the United Provinces from 1621 to 1668, in fifteen volumes, inserting at large all the historical documents. He died in England in 1669, having resided there in an official character forty years. Milton, in a state letter, praises his 'prudence and conspicuous probity'.]

WESTMINSTER, FEBRUARY 5, 1654.

It is very gratifying to perceive, that you retain the same remembrance of me, which you kindly manifested by visiting me frequently when you were here. As to my work on Divorce, which, you inform me, you have given to some one to be translated into Dutch, I would greatly prefer a Latin version; for I have learned by the experience of

those publications, how the world is accustomed to receive opinions not yet common.

I have written three dissertations on that subject. The first in two books, in which the Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce (the title of the work) are contained at large. The other is entitled 'Tetrachordon'; in it the four principal passages of Scripture on the question are explained. The third is 'Colasterion,' a reply to a smattering fellow[1]. Which of these, or what edition of them, you are going to have translated, I do not know. Of the first, there is a second edition much enlarged. If you are not apprised of this, or if you will let me know what you want from me, I will at once with pleasure transmit to you either the corrected impression, or the other works. I would not have any alteration or addition made at present. Wherefore, since you think it worth while that I should have a faithful interpreter, I wish you all success.

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[1] The anonymous author of 'Divorce at Pleasure.' Milton had to resort to much quibbling to bend the sentiments of the New Testament to countenance a doctrine, the sincerity of which his personal situation and necessities clouded with so much suspicion.

XVII.

TO EZEKIEL SPANHEIM.

[Professor of belles-lettres in Geneva. The Emperor Ferdinand III. appointed him tutor of his son, and Spanheim took the opportunity of studying the laws and politics of Germany; after which he entered the service of the Elector of Brandenburgh, whom he served nine years as envoy extraordinary. He again changed masters, became a Minister of State in Prussia, was created a Baron, and sent as Ambassador to Queen Anne. He died in England at the age of eighty-one. He was a man of general acquirements, and conspicuous as a diplomatist, scholar, antiquarian and critic. His principal work is a dissertation on ancient coins, in two volumes, folio, printed at Rome in 1664, and republished in London and Amsterdam. Besides this, he translated, with annotations, several learned works.]

WESTMINSTER, MARCH 24, 1654.

I know not to what accident it was owing, that I received your letter almost three months after its date; but it was clearly my business to make a more speedy reply on that account, which I resolved from day to day to execute; but I find that in consequence of other engagements, I have procrastinated it for nearly three months longer. I would not have you suppose from this delay, that my sense of your kindness has cooled; but rather that it has increased; inasmuch, as I have the more frequently, and for a longer time, been intending to perform my duty. And its tardy discharge has at least this excuse, that it is a clearer acknowledgment of a debt, when it has existed so long, than if it had been paid as soon as due.

You are not wrong in the opinion you intimate in the beginning of your letter—that it is not to be wondered at if I am addressed by a foreigner; for you cannot judge me more correctly, than in supposing that I account no truly good man a stranger, or unknown. I can readily believe that such is your character, being the son of a most learned and

pious father[1], and yourself are esteemed by good men, and abhor the wicked. And as I happen to be at war with the latter, Calandrinus[2] has acted kindly and according to my advice, in signifying to you, that I should be very glad if you would join forces with me against the common enemy. This you have done in your letter, a part of which, trusting to your good wishes, I have not hesitated to quote anonymously in my Defence[3], as testimony. I will send you the work as soon as it is issued, if I can find a safe conveyance. In the mean time, I think you may direct your letters to the care of Turretin of

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[1] Frederic Spanheim, professor of theology in Geneva and Leyden. In the former chair, he was succeeded by Milton's famous enemy—More. He published several political and theological works, and is mentioned in Tetrachordon as "a writer of 'Evangelic Doubts'."

[2] Wood (Fasti Oxon.) records a Cæsar Calandrinus, 'by birth a German, by profession a puritanical theologist,' who was a favourite of Archbishop Usher, who took him to Ireland.

Toland says, that Calandrinus, Spanheim and others of Geneva, kept Milton informed of all matters appertaining to More.

[3] 'Defensio Secunda,' published in this year.

Geneva, who is staying in London, and whose brother I know there[4]; through him our letters can be very conveniently transmitted.

I pray you to be assured of my high regard, and of my anxious desire to be thought worthy of your affection.

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[4] The brother was Francis Turretin, Professor of Theology in Geneva, father of the more celebrated John Alphonso Turretin.

XVIII.

TO HENRY OLDENBURGH

WESTMINSTER, JUNE 25, 1656.

Yours, by young Ranelagh[1], finds me much occupied, which obliges me to be more brief than I wish. You have so honestly paid what you promised when you went away, that I do not believe any one has been more punctual at the Calends[2]. Though your departure be a loss to me, yet, since it promotes your gratification, I wish you joy upon it; as your mind is so happily constituted that you can easily elevate it from the ambition or ease of a city life, to the contemplation of sublime topics. Still I do

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[1] Richard Jones. See the succeeding letter.

[2] The Roman pay-day.

not know what advantage your retreat[3] can afford, excepting an abundance of books. The companions of your studies, whom you find there, I suspect are what they are, rather by their natural talents, than by any instruction they derive at that place: but perhaps I am unjust to it, because it detains you from me. Do you, however, take notice, that there are too many of them who pollute both divine and human subjects by their vapid loquacity, through fear of seeming to do nothing worthy of the large stipends by which a worse community supports them. But you will get wisdom in these matters better, by yourself.

The Chinese Annals, which you say are promised by the Jesuit Martin, are doubtless most anxiously expected, on account of their novelty; but I do not see what authority or support they can give to the books of Moses.

My friend Cyriac[4] reciprocates your compliments. Farewell.

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[3] Oldenburgh entered Oxford in this year, principally for the sake of access to the Bodleian library.

[4] Cyriac Skinner, a pupil of Milton, and of the same school of politics. He seems also to have been a mathe-

matician, as in one of the two sonnets addressed to him, Milton begs him to

'Let Euclid rest, and Archimedes pause.'

The 'Mr Skinner, Merchant,' to whom the manuscript of the Treatise on Christian Doctrine, found in 1823, was directed, was probably Daniel Skinner, a nephew of Cyriac. The latter was a grandson of Sir Edward Coke.

XIX.

TO RICHARD JONES.

[Afterwards Earl Ranelagh: a pupil of Milton, and companion of Henry Oldenburgh at Oxford. From the technical *badinage* with which he is addressed, it is probable that he was designed for the Law.]

WESTMINSTER, SEPTEMBER 21, 1656.

Sudden business, as, you know, all mine is, has several times prevented my answering your last. I then heard that you had gone on an excursion to the neighbourhood. This will be delivered to you by your excellent mother, now departing for Ireland, whose absence both you and I have cause to lament; for she stood in the place of all relations to me[1].

[1] Mr Hayley suggests, that Lady Ranelagh may have

You are right in believing that I feel an interest in you; and I am anxious that you should become daily more persuaded of it, in proportion as you make me perceive, that you not merely possess a good capacity, but are producing fruit. Which, with reliance on Divine help, you not only covenant, but offer security and bail for its performance, as if I had entered an action against you: and in case of non-performance, you do not refuse to confess judgment, and pay the award. Truly I am delighted that you have such good hope of yourself; but you cannot retract now, when you have not only neglected your promises, but have forfeited your recognizance.

The simple assertion that you are not displeased with Oxford, does not convince me that you have derived any profit, or become any wiser:—that you must prove by a far different method. Whilst you are engaged in the study of philosophy, I would not

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advised Milton in the care of his young children, after his wife's death. The above ordinary expression serves Hayley as a text to expatiate (*de more suo*) on the unparalleled sensibility and gratitude which dictated it.

Lady Ranelagh was a sister of Robert Boyle, the philosopher.

have you admire too much the victories of princes, which you extol; and similar exploits in which mere force is of the greatest avail. For what great subject of admiration is it, if, in the country of rams, horns grow so strong that they can butt down towns and cities? Do you, in your youth, study to discriminate and value great models, not as they are recommended by force or strength, but by justice and moderation. Farewell. Present my best respects to your chum, the honoured Henry Oldenburgh.

XX.

TO PETER HEIMBACH.

[Another of Milton's scholars: he was from Germany, and the thirty-first letter is addressed to him as Counsellor of the elector of Brandenburgh.]

WESTMINSTER, NOVEMBER 8, 1656.

My dear Heimbach:

You have abundantly performed your promises, and all the other engagements which, in your goodness, you made to me, excepting as to your return, which, you assured me, should be within two months, at furthest; but, unless my impatience has deceived me in the time, you have been absent nearly three months. You have acted altogether right as to the Atlas, which I inquired about. I did not wish you to purchase it, but to learn the lowest price. You say they charge a hundred and

thirty florins for it. You certainly must mean that that immense sum is asked for the Mauritanian mountain—not for a book of maps. So much luxury has been introduced by printers, that the furniture of a library seems to be as sumptuous as that of a villa. As maps can be of little use to me on account of my blindness, I fear that whilst I should in vain attempt to survey the delineation of the earth with my sightless eyes, I should lament my destitution the more, as the book cost me so much. You may, however, do me this favour: let me know how many volumes there are of the whole work, and whether the Blaye or Jansen edition be the fuller, and more correct. I hope to hear this from yourself on your early return, rather than from another letter. Meanwhile, farewell—come to me as soon as possible.

XXI.

TO EMERIC BIGOT.

[A native of France, devoted to letters. He collected a large and valuable library, and afforded much assistance to literary men, with whom his correspondence was extensive. His only work was the publication of the Greek life of Chrysostom by Palladius, discovered in manuscript in Florence, which he accompanied with a Latin translation. He died in 1689.]

WESTMINSTER, MARCH 24, 1656.

It was truly gratifying to me that when in England you thought me especially worthy of your visits and attentions; but it is still more so, that after so long an interval, you address me by letter. For in the first instance the opinions of others, probably, induced you to call on me: but you could scarcely now return by means of correspondence, if your own choice, or benevolence at least, did not incite

you. Whence I conclude, that I may properly congratulate myself: for many have made a figure in their works, whose conversation and manners indicate nothing but what is mean and ordinary. If I have written any thing well, I should wish my mind and character to be correspondent: I should thus add weight to my writings, and however insignificant might be their merit, I would be entitled to some credit on that account. It appears to me, that I have not learned more of what is good and excellent, from the perusal of the best authors, than from what I have drawn pure and unadulterated from a deep insight into their minds and understandings.

I am glad that you are confident of my tranquillity under the loss of my sight, and of my attention and regard to strangers. Why should I not cheerfully endure this deprivation; since, considering it not as lost, but *drawn within*, I may hope that it will whet rather than dull the edge of my mind. So that I am not out of humour with study, nor do I intermit its pursuit, notwithstanding it has punished me so severely. The example of Telephus, the Mysian king, who did not refuse to be healed by

the same weapon which wounded him, has warned me against peevishness[1].

In the work on the manner of holding Parliaments, which you have, I have taken the pains to correct the passages alluding to the manuscripts of the distinguished Lord Bradshaw, and of Cotton[2], and confirmed those which were doubtful; as you will see by your papers which I herewith return. As you desired to know whether there is an autograph of this work in the tower of London, I sent to the herald, who has charge of the archives, with whom I am well acquainted, and he informs me there is no copy in the collection.

I shall be very grateful, if you will in return take the trouble to procure me some books. I want of the

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[1] He was pierced by the spear of Achilles, and cured by an application of its rust. Ovid was Milton's favourite classic :

'Telephus æterna consumptus tabe perisset,
'Si non, quæ nocuit, dextra tulisset opem.
'Et mea, si facinus nullum commisimus opto
'Vulnera qui fecit, facta levare velit.'

Trist. lib. v. el. 2.

[2] Probably the President of the Regicide Court; and Sir Robert Cotton, of the reigns of Elizabeth and James.

Byzantine histories—the Chronicles of Theophanes, folio, Greek and Latin; the Historical Abridgment of Constantine Manchas, and Codinus on the Antiquities of Constantinople, Greek and Latin, folio; the Librarian Anastasius's History and Lives of the Popes, folio; to which you may add Michael Glycas, and John Sinnamus, who has continued Anna Comnena, of the same edition, if they are out[3]. There is no need of warning you to obtain them as cheaply as you can, since you are not only very frugal yourself, but I understand that the price of the above works is fixed and known. Lord Stoup[4] has undertaken the charge of the money to pay you, and to provide for their convenient transportation.

Praying for the accomplishment of all your wishes I bid you farewell.

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[3] The Byzantine historians were published seriatim from the press of the Louvre 1642—1670 in thirty-eight volumes folio.*

[4] Stoup appears to have been a government agent. In a State letter from the Protector to the authorities of the city of Geneva, he is mentioned as having charge of a remittance of part of the sum of two thousand pounds collected in England for the suffering Protestants of Piedmont.

XXII.

TO RICHARD JONES.

WESTMINSTER.

I was much longer in receiving your letter, than you were in sending it, as I believe it remained fifteen days where your mother left it. I am happy to learn from it your sentiments of regard and gratitude to me: my best care and most faithful counsels have certainly never been wanting, to answer the estimation and confidence which your excellent mother has placed in me, and to meet your capacity. Your present retreat is, as you say, agreeable and healthful, and supplied with sufficient books for the purposes of a University. If the delightful soil could only contribute to the minds of the inhabitants as much as it does to their comfort, nothing would be wanting to complete its felicity. And there is a well-furnished library there too; but unless the minds of

the scholars are still better furnished by the choicest instruction, you would more properly call it an *apo*theca, than a *biblio*theca[1].

You do well in acknowledging that it is your duty to bring docility and industry to all these studies. Take care lest I shall at some time find it necessary to remind you repeatedly of this sentiment. You will most easily avoid that necessity, by strict attention to the serious and friendly advice of your accomplished companion, Henry Oldenburgh.

Farewell, my beloved Richard: let me exhort and incite you, like another Timothy[2], to virtue and piety, by the example of that excellent woman your mother.

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[1] *Apotheca*—any repository. Horace uses it for *wine-cellar*. Perhaps the pun might be translated—'You might as well call it a granary, as a library.'

[2] The apostle Paul urged his disciple to imitate the good examples of his grandmother and mother. 2 Tim. i. 5.

XXIII.

TO HENRY DE BRASS.

[This correspondent seems to have been a young German nobleman, on a tour through England. I have not seen his name elsewhere.]

WESTMINSTER, JULY 15, 1657.

Sir:

I perceive that you, unlike most of the youth of this age, who visit foreign countries, are wisely and judiciously travelling, not for the sake of juvenile studies, but to enlarge your knowledge, after the example of the ancient philosophers. Yet, whenever I read your letters, it seems to me that you have come among strangers, not so much for the purpose of acquiring, as of imparting information,—to exchange rather than purchase excellent commodities. I wish it were as easy for me to assist and promote every branch of your useful studies,

as it is agreeable and pleasing to be solicited to do so, by a person of your promising talents.

You express your determination to write to me for the purpose of asking me to clear up the difficulties which historians have, for many ages, left in obscurity. I have never undertaken, nor can I venture to undertake, any thing of that kind. As to Sallust, since you desire my candid judgment, I will freely say, that I prefer him to any Latin historian; such is the almost universal sentiment of the ancients. Your Tacitus has his merits, but in my mind, his greatest is, that he has as much as possible imitated Sallust. As I discussed this subject with you orally, I believe it has had the effect (so far as I can collect from what you write,) of gaining you to the same opinion respecting that most able author. Thus, you inquire—as he has said in the beginning of his Catiline war that one of the difficulties of writing history is to make the style correspond with the subject—by what method could that faculty be best acquired? My idea is, that he who writes history should be as magnanimous, and as skilful in the use of his materials, as he whose exploits he records[1]: that he should apprehend and estimate

[1] So, elsewhere, on the subject of poetry: 'He who

the greatest events with a commensurate mind, and having done so, should narrate them clearly, and with dignity, in pure language: I am not anxious to have it elegant—for I want a historian, not an orator. I do not like to see sentiments frequently expressed, and prolix opinions interspersed, lest, having forsaken his narrative, the historian infringe on the province of the politician; he has enough in his own line to do in explaining designs and stating facts, following—not his own ingenuity or conjecture—but truth. I may add, that it is a characteristic of Sallust, (a quality which he himself commends in Cato,) that he despatches many things in few words, which cannot be accomplished without great acuteness and some restraint. There are many writers from whom you would not desire elegant composition, or a multitude of incidents. Sallust, in my estimation, is superior to all the Roman authors in combining brevity and copiousness—

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would not be frustrate of his hope to write well hereafter in laudable things, ought himself to be a true poem; that is, a composition and pattern of the most honourable things; not presuming to sing high praises of heroic men or famous cities, unless he have in himself the experience and the practice of all that is praiseworthy.'

that is, narrating much in few words. Such are the qualifications I consider indispensable to a historian who hopes to adapt his style to his facts.

But why do I say these things to you, since your own sense will readily suggest them, and as you have entered upon a path, if you continue in which, you will soon have none wiser than yourself to consult? I strenuously exhort and advise you, (although you stand in need of nobody's prompting—yet not to disappoint you wholly in this reply) by all the authority which you allow me to exercise over you, to keep advancing. Farewell: increase in virtue and in the love of wisdom.

XXIV.

TO HENRY OLDENBURGH.

WESTMINSTER, AUGUST 1, 1657.

I rejoice to hear of your safe arrival at Samor, which, I suppose, is the termination of your journey: for you are not wrong in the belief, that it is very acceptable news to me, who love you as you deserve, and know that the object of your tour is honourable and praiseworthy. As to what you have heard of that infamous priest[1] having been called to a place so eminent for learning, I would rather that some one had heard that he was in the boat of Charon, than you that he was in the pulpit of Charenton. It is much to be feared that the sinner who hopes to reach heaven with such a guide, will be

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[1] More; who had been elected pastor of the Protestant church at Charenton, near Paris.

wretchedly disappointed. Woe to the church (may God avert the omen!) where such ministers please the ears only; whom, if it wishes to be truly reformed, it would eject, instead of inviting.

You have acted properly and handsomely in not showing my writings, except to those who have asked to see them; and this is Horace's opinion as well as mine:

'Lest you offend with too officious zeal,
'And my poor work' their 'just resentment feel[2].'

A learned acquaintance of mine, who spent last summer at Samor, wrote to me that my book[3] was greatly desired there; I sent him but one copy: he wrote back that nothing could exceed the pleasure it gave some learned men, to whom he had shown it. If I did not think it would be acceptable to them, I should have saved you the labour, and myself the expense. But

'Throw down the burden, if it gall your back,
'Nor at' Salmurium 'fiercely break the pack[4].'

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[2] Epist. i. 13.

[3] Probably his 'Authoris Defensio;' his last attack on More, published in 1655.

[4] Epist. i. 13. (Francis.)

I have remembered you to my friend Lawrence[5], as you requested. There is nothing that I am more solicitous about than that you should attend to the health of yourself and protegé[6], and that you return as soon as possible, having realized your wishes.

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[5] Author of a work 'On our Communion and War with Angels.' He is the subject of a sonnet, in which Milton addresses him—

'Of virtuous father, virtuous son.'

The father was Henry Lawrence, member of parliament in 1653, and afterwards president of Cromwell's council. He and the Earl of Manchester are called in one of the books against More 'men of the greatest genius and accomplishments.'

[6] Jones and Oldenburgh were travelling in company.

XXV.

TO RICHARD JONES.

WESTMINSTER, AUGUST 1, 1657.

I am very glad to hear that you have completed so long a tour without accident; and commend your good sense in despising the allurements of Paris, and speeding where you may enjoy studious leisure and learned society. You will be safe there, so long as you keep yourself under such restraint; but you must be on your guard against the quicksands, and rocks, and Syren songs. And as to the vintage from which you anticipate so much pleasure, I should not like you to thirst too much for the Salmurian, unless you intend to dilute the new wine of Bacchus with more than a fifth part of the freer wine of the Muses. But you have an excellent adviser on these subjects, were I to be silent;

and by listening to him, you will consult best for yourself, afford the greatest satisfaction to your excellent mother, and daily increase her affection. To this end you should constantly implore the assistance of Almighty God. Farewell. Return as virtuous as you are accomplished, which will be more pleasing to me than all your other acquirements.

XXVI.

TO HENRY DE BRASS.

WESTMINSTER, DECEMBER 16, 1657.

Illustrious Sir:

In consequence of the hindrance of business for several days, I am much later in answering you, than I intended; which I was the more anxious to do, without delay, as I perceived from your learned letter, that there is not so much occasion for me to impart instruction, (which you ask in compliment, not because you need it) as to congratulate you. But I congratulate myself, in the first place, on having given so clear an exposition of my opinion of Sallust, and you on your assiduous perusal of that most judicious author with so much advantage, with reference to whom I may assert, as Quintilian says of Cicero, that he is no small proficient in history, who takes pleasure in Sallust.

The doctrine of Aristotle, in the third book of his Rhetoric[1], which you wish explained, that 'opinions may be employed as well in proof as in narration,' is erroneous. I do not see what more is to be explained, than that by narration and *faith*, which is also called *proof*, is meant that which the orator, not the historian employs. For the business of the orator and historian, in narration and proof, is as distinct as the arts themselves. You can best learn what appertains to a historian from the ancient authors, as Polybius, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Cicero, Lucian, and many others, who have scattered some instructions on that subject.

Wishing you all prosperity and safety in your studies and journeys, and success worthy of the earnestness and diligence which I perceive you are applying to the best subjects, I bid you farewell.

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[1] Chap. XVI.

XXVII.

TO PETER HEIMBACH.

WESTMINSTER, DECEMBER 18, 1657.

I received yours, dated at the Hague, December 18th, and answer it the same day, as your business seems to require. After thanking me for favours of which I know nothing, and which I sincerely wish had an existence, you ask me to recommend you, through Mr Lawrence, to our ambassador elect to Holland. This I regret is not in my power; since, owing to the very little familiarity I have with those in authority, I keep myself, and willingly too, almost constantly at home. Besides, I believe he is now on the point of sailing, and has in his suite the person whom, I judge from his letters, he intends for the situation which you desire. But the courier is departing. Farewell.

XXVIII.

TO JOHN BADIÆUS.

[Badiæus was pastor of a Protestant congregation in the town of Orange, France, and suffering under the first ebullitions of the bigotry of Louis XIV. which terminated in the revocation of the edict of Nantes.]

WESTMINSTER, APRIL 21, 1659.

Reverend and illustrious Sir:

Of so long a delay in answering you, I trust our friend Dury[1] will not hesitate to acknowledge

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[1] John Dury, a Scotch clergyman. He served during the Interregnum as agent to conciliate the Reformed and Lutheran churches of Germany, and laboured for that object forty years. His protracted efforts producing no good result, he as a last resource to accomplish his pacific purpose, wrote a solution of the book of Revelation, thinking to establish at least one subject in which all sects might

that I may attribute the fault to himself; for as soon as he delivered the statement which you desired me to hear, of what you had done and suffered in the cause of the Gospel, I prepared this letter, that it might be ready for the first courier; fearing that you might put a bad construction on my continued silence. In the mean time, I am under great obligations to your friend Moulin of Nismes, who, by his conversations and kind mention of me, has introduced me to the notice of so many excellent men in those parts. And although I am not ignorant, that I have become known extensively enough—either because I did not decline a public controversy with an adversary of so much renown, or on account of the notoriety of the dispute, or of this species of discussion in general—yet I measure my fame by the

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coincide. He was attacked in a pamphlet called 'The time-serving Proteus, and ambidexter Divine uncased to the world.' The Council of State employed him to translate Iconoclastes. He was a member of the assembly of Divines under the Long Parliament, but afterwards joined the Independents. Two letters of his are cited in Milton's 'Authoris Defensio.' The antiquary Wood furnishes a catalogue of twenty publications by him. Mosheim gives him the character of a zealous but sincere enthusiast. (*Eccl. Hist. Cent.* xvii. sec. 2, part 2, ch. 1.)

reputation which I have acquired with the good. And I see plainly that you are of the same disposition, having, under the incitement of the knowledge and love of Christian truth, borne so many labours and encountered so many enemies. You act thus bravely every day, and are so far from seeking the applause of the wicked, that you do not fear to rouse their certain hatred and maledictions. Happy man! whom the Almighty has distinguished from so many thousands wise and learned in other respects, in snatching you from the very gates and jaws of hell, to bring you to so remarkable and intrepid a profession of his Gospel.

And I now have reason to think, that it was through the special providence of God, that I did not answer you sooner. For understanding from your letter that when you were hunted and beset on every side by violent enemies, and you properly looked around for a refuge in the last extremity, if your affairs should reach such a crisis, that England chiefly pleased you; I rejoiced, and not for my own sake merely, that you made that determination. I was gratified with the idea of enjoying your society, and that you thought so highly of my country, but grieved that I could see no way of providing for you

here, especially as you are ignorant of English. But it now very opportunely happens, that a superannuated French minister will die before many days. The principal persons of that church, understanding that you are not safely situated where you are, (I do not state this from doubtful rumours, but have heard it from themselves) are very desirous of choosing you—nay, actually invite you, in the place of that pastor. They have resolved to defray the expenses of the journey, and promise that your family arrangements shall be provided for so that you shall be placed on an equality with any of the French clergy here: and that nothing shall be wanting which can contribute to your willing entrance upon the evangelical functions amongst them.

Wherefore if you will hear my advice, reverend sir, come as soon as possible to a people who are very desirous of you, and reap this harvest, which, though perhaps not so fruitful of this world's goods, yet I hope (what men of your character are much more anxious for) an abundant one of souls. Be persuaded that your coming will be welcomed by all good men, and that the sooner you come the better. Farewell.

XXIX.

TO HENRY OLDENBURGH.

WESTMINSTER, DECEMBER 20, 1659.

As you ask pardon for your silence, you will the sooner excuse mine, whose turn I believe it was to write. I beg you to think that the omission has arisen from no diminution of my affection, but studies or domestic engagements have prevented, or perhaps my laziness has made me guilty of the remissness. You inquire after my health, which, by the blessing of Providence, is as good as usual. I am far from undertaking the history of our commotions, which you seem to recommend to me: they are more worthy of silence, than publicity; and there is a greater necessity for some one to allay, than to relate them[1].

---

[1] The Protector died in September, 1658: Richard

I join in your apprehension that this civil discord, or insanity rather, may make us appear to the enemies of liberty and religion, lately associated[2], too ripe for their purposes: they cannot inflict a more grievous wound on religion, than we have done long ago by our enormities. But I trust that God, for the sake of his abused glory, will frustrate the counsels and designs of the enemy, whatever kings and cardinals may meditate or plot.

In the meantime, I wish for the Protestant Synod of Loudon, which you say is soon to convene[3], what has never yet happened to any council—a happy issue, not like Nazianzen's[4]: but it will have done

---

Cromwell was deposed April 22, 1569, and at the date of this letter, General Monk was rapidly bringing on the restoration: three months afterwards the Long Parliament dissolved, and Charles II. was proclaimed on the eighth of May, 1660.

[2] For the establishment of monarchy and prelacy.

[3] Bayle states that this Synod had been sitting two months when this was written, and that Milton must have had little correspondence with France not to have known it.

[4] Allusion is probably made to St Gregory's interference in the synodical dispute respecting the incumbent of the

enough, if it shall decree nothing else than the expulsion of More. As soon as he makes any disclosures as to his adversary Posthumus, I pray you let me know it the first opportunity. Farewell.

---

bishopric of Antioch; his endeavours to reconcile the belligerents so excited their animosity, that he resigned his own see of Constantinople, in which they had just confirmed him. In one of his polemical works, Milton quotes the assertion of Nazianzen, that councils rather increased than removed the evils of the Church, and his resolution never to attend another.

XXX.

TO RICHARD JONES.

WESTMINSTER, DECEMBER 20, 1659.

You apologize so modestly for the long interval between your letters, when you could more justly accuse me of neglect, that I scarcely know whether the more to regret your delinquency or admire your excuse. But beware of supposing, that if you owe me any gratitude, I estimate your sense of it by the frequency of your letters. I shall consider you most grateful, when my extolled attentions shall not be emblazoned on paper, but appear constantly in your application and merit. In the gymnasium of the world which you have entered, you have wisely chosen the path of virtue: remember, however, that virtue and vice have a common road, and that you must advance to where the road

forks. You should now prepare yourself betimes, that when you leave the pleasant and flowery highway, you may ascend, of your own accord, (even willingly encountering toil and danger,) the steep and difficult road which leads to the summit of virtue only[1]. This you can attain with much greater ease than others, since you are provided with so faithful and skilful a guide. Farewell[2].

---

[1] These figures are drawn from Cebes' ΠΙΝΑΞ, another part of which seems to have supplied a pretty idea in 'Comus:'

'Mortals that would follow me!
'Love Virtue—she alone is free:
'She can teach ye how to climb,
'Higher than the sphery chime;
'Or if Virtue feeble were,
'Heaven itself would stoop to her.'

And in the Essay on Education: 'we shall conduct you to a hill-side, laborious indeed at the first ascent, but else so smooth, so green, so full of goodly prospects and melodious sounds on every side, that the harp of Orpheus was not more charming.'

[2] Oldenburgh.

XXXI.

TO PETER HEIMBACH.

[Milton, happy in escaping unharmed from the inquisition for the regicides, their abettors and apologists, remained in prudent seclusion until his death; engaging only in literary publications, (in which 'Paradise Lost' was included) which broke but little upon his obscurity.]

LONDON, AUGUST 15, 1666.

It is no wonder that amidst the deaths of so many of my countrymen in this grievous and pestilential year, that you believed the report of my decease. If that rumour prevailed amongst you in consequence, as it would appear, of your anxiety for my safety, I am not displeased. But through the mercy of God, who provided a safe retreat for me in the country[1], I am still alive and well, and I hope

[1] During the plague of 1665, he resided in a house

not incapacitated for any temporal duty which remains for my performance. It is very grateful that you remembered me after so long an interval; although the fine language you use to express it excites a suspicion that you had forgotten me—I mean when you say that you admire the union of so many different virtues in me. I should dread too numerous a progeny from so many unions, if it were not the case that virtues are best nourished, and flourish most in narrow and necessitous circumstances. Yet one of them did not make a very handsome return for my hospitality; for what you call my political virtue (I would rather you had named it patriotism), after cajoling me with its fair name, almost expatriated me! The rest of them sing loudly in chorus that 'wherever we prosper in rectitude, there is our country'[2].

---

which his Quaker friend Elwood (who gave the hint of 'Paradise Regained') procured for him in Buckinghamshire. 'Paradise Lost' appeared in 1667: 'Paradise Regained' in 1671.

[2] So rendered by Hayley, who has translated this letter in his Life of Milton. The original is, 'reliquarum [virtutum] tamen chorus clare concinit—patria est, ubicunque

I will conclude, after requesting you, that if you find any thing incorrectly written, or a neglect of punctuation, you will impute it to the lad who has penned this, who is entirely ignorant of Latin, and to whom I am forced—not without misery—to dictate each letter separately.

I rejoice that your merits as a man, whom I knew as a youth of excellent promise, have raised you to so honourable a station in the favour of your prince[3]. Wishing and expecting for you all prosperity, I bid you farewell.

---

est bene'; which may also imply his political resignation to the change, on the principle of Pope's sophism,

'Whate'er is best administered is best.'

[3] Heimbach was now Counsellor of the Elector of Brandenburgh.

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ERRORS.

On page 17 ' would be' is printed for ' are.'
The surname of Dante (page 52) is *Alighieri.*
Conversazionés (page 53) should be *conversazioni.*
For *would,* in the penultimate line of page 71, read *should.*
The reference figure 2, on page 111, should be at ' guide.'

THE END.

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